



USDA – National
Agricultural Statistics
Service, Tennessee
Field Office

Debra K. Kenerson
Director



Cooperating with Tennessee
Department Of Agriculture

Ken Givens, Commissioner

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/tn> nass-tn@nass.usda.gov Phone 1-800-626-0987

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Featuring:

August Crop Production TDA Issues New Rules for Protecting Livestock

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Farmers Expecting Above Average Yields in 2005

Tennessee farmers are expecting above average yields for most of their 2005 crops, despite above normal temperatures and only widely scattered showers since the remnants of Hurricane Dennis passed through in mid-July. Based on an August 1 crop yield survey conducted by the Tennessee Field Office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service, cotton and soybean yields, while down from last year, are well above the average for the past five years. Corn yields are down markedly from last year's record, but are still the fourth highest ever for Tennessee. Record hay yield and production are projected for the second year in a row, while tobacco yield prospects decreased from a year ago, according to recent survey results. State Director Debra Kenerson stated, "Despite relatively dry conditions across the State this summer, most crops are enduring the heat and showing excellent yield potential heading into the fall." The August forecast, which is based on farmers' expectations of final yields as of the first of the month, showed the following: **Corn**, 128 bushels per acre, down 12 bushels from a year earlier; **Cotton**, 852 pounds per acre, down 48 pounds from last year but the second highest yield on record; **Soybeans**, 40 bushels per acre, 1 bushel below the previous year; **Burley Tobacco**, 1,900 pounds per acre, down 20 pounds from last year; and **Hay**, 2.60 tons per acre, up 0.1 tons from last year and a new state record.

Corn Production Down 17 Percent

Tennessee's corn production is forecast at 71.7 million bushels, down 17 percent from a year ago. Based on conditions as of August 1, yields are expected to average 128 bushels per acre, 12 bushels below 2004. This year's forecast, however, ranks fourth best among historical yields. Producers expect to harvest 560,000 acres for grain, down 9 percent from last year and the lowest since 1995. Dry weather over the State's major production areas caused pollination problems and, as a result, many fields have corn plants with fewer and smaller ears. The majority of the corn crop was planted by mid-May, but the month proved to be one of the driest on record. This weather trend continued into the silking and beyond stage, causing reports of twisting in some areas. Fortunately, Hurricane Dennis brought some relief in the form of cooler temperatures and

much needed rainfall, boosting crop conditions considerably. As of the first week of August, ninety-one percent of the crop had reached the dough stage with three-fifths of the crop having entered the dent or beyond stage, a few days ahead of schedule.

Soybean Yields Outstanding for Third Year In a Row

Soybean production is forecast at 48.0 million bushels, down less than 1 percent from last year. Soybean yields are forecast at 40 bushels per acre, 1 bushel below 2004, and only 2 bushels below the record set in 2003. Acreage for harvest is estimated at 1.20 million acres, up 20,000 acres from a year ago. Tennessee's soybean crop was planted by the middle of June and much of the crop was blooming by month's end, a pace two weeks ahead of normal. Producers have been diligently scouting and spraying fungicides and insecticides as a preventative measure. The planting of more early-maturing varieties than normal this year has helped to minimize the effect of above normal temperatures over the past several weeks, keeping yields expectations in line with last year's more moderate growing season. As of August 7, ninety-five percent of the crop was blooming with nearly ninety percent of the acreage setting pods, both well ahead of normal.

New Record for Cotton Production

Tennessee's cotton production is forecast at 1,110,000 bales, surpassing last year's record by 126,000 bales. Cotton yields are expected to average 852 pounds per acre, down 48 pounds from a year ago but the second highest on record. Producers expect to harvest 625,000 acres, up 19 percent from 2004. It was a "model" year for planting cotton, as there were no rain delays and soil temperatures were good. Cool weather during early spring caused some delays in emergence, but adequate moisture, sunshine, and heat during June helped the crop to take off. By the end of July, development was running a few days ahead of the five-year average. As of August 7, eighty-six percent of the crop was rated in good-to-excellent condition, virtually identical to the crop condition rating of last year's tremendous crop.

Lowest Burley Production Since 1927

As of August 1, burley production is forecast at 32.3 million pounds, 30 percent below a year ago and the lowest production in 78 years. Driving this low level is the tobacco buy-out, which has resulted in burley acreage dipping below the 20,000 acre mark for the first time since 1922. Yields are forecast to average 1,900 pounds per acre, down 20 pounds from 2004. Tobacco transplanting began on schedule in early May and was completed slightly ahead of the five-year average by the end of June. Black shank has caused moderate to severe damage in a few areas of the state. Over half of the acreage had been topped by August 7, with the crop rated in mostly good condition. Tennessee's dark-fired tobacco yields are forecast at 3,000 pounds. Dark air-cured is forecast to yield 2,700 pounds per acre, down 50 pounds from 2004.

Second Consecutive State Record for Hay Yield and Production

Hay production, excluding alfalfa, is forecast at 4.81 million tons, 1 percent above the previous record set in 2004. Yields are expected to average 2.6 tons per acre, up 0.1 tons from last year and, if realized, a new record. During much of June and July, harvest continued at a normal pace allowing many farmers to get a second cutting. Hay has remained in mostly good condition throughout the growing season.

Apple Production Down 22 Percent

Apple production is estimated at 9.0 million pounds, down 22 percent from last year's production of 11.0 million pounds. Development progressed behind last year and, the normal pace for both budding and blooming. In late April, there were reports of frost damage, which had a negative impact on East Tennessee production. There were also some reports of loss due to fireblight.

Crop Forecasts: Tennessee and United States, August 1, 2005, with Comparisons

Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
		2004	Indicated 2005	2004	Indicated 2005	2004	Indicated 2005
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
Tennessee							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	11,000	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	615	560	140	128	86,100	71,680
Cotton ¹	lb.	525	625	900	852	984	1,110
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	1,900	1,850	2.50	2.60	4,750	4,810
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1.95	1.90
Soybeans	bu.	1,180	1,200	41.0	40.0	48,380	48,000
Tobacco, All	lb.	30.26	23.26	2,161	2,189	65,381	50,918
Dark-fired (22 & 23)	lb.	5.72	5.72	3,115	3,000	17,816	17,160
Burley (31)	lb.	24.0	17.0	1,920	1,900	46,080	32,300
One-sucker (35)	lb.	.54	.54	2,750	2,700	1,485	1,458
Winter Wheat	bu.	280	170	49.0	60.0	13,720	10,200
United States							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	10,419,900	9,837,100
Corn for grain	bu.	73,632	74,368	160.4	139.2	11,807,217	10,349,841
Cotton ¹	lb.	13,057	13,657	855	748	23,251	21,291
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	40,209	39,605	2.05	1.92	82,391	76,068
Peaches	ton	---	---	---	---	1,307.1	1,233.9
Soybeans	bu.	73,958	72,184	42.5	38.7	3,140,996	2,791,133
Tobacco, All	lb.	408,040	316,860	2,155	2,137	879,227	677,088
Dark-fired (22 & 23)	lb.	11.73	12.52	3,167	3,179	37,151	39,800
Burley (31)	lb.	153.15	107.60	1,908	1,893	292,172	203,740
One-sucker (35)	lb.	4.26	4.04	2,799	2,787	11,922	11,258
Winter Wheat	bu.	34,462	34,271	43.5	44.4	1,499,434	1,520,848

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.

TDA Implements New Rules to Guard Against Livestock Disease

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – The Tennessee Department of Agriculture recently announced the implementation of new emergency rules to protect the state's livestock from the potential introduction of vesicular stomatitis, a viral disease affecting hoofed animals. The new protective measures, which put in place stringent importation requirements, are in response to recent confirmations of the disease in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah.

“Tennessee is a destination for livestock and has major transportation routes which intersect the state in all directions. It's important that we move to protect our livestock industry from the threat of diseases. These rules are being imposed upon all hoofed animals entering Tennessee from areas having confirmed cases of vesicular stomatitis,” said Dr. Ron Wilson, State Veterinarian. The emergency rules went into effect July 25 and include:

- No hoofed livestock may enter Tennessee if vesicular stomatitis has been diagnosed within ten miles of the premises of origin since January 1, 2005.
- All hoofed livestock originating from a location greater than ten but less than 100 miles from a premises where vesicular stomatitis has been diagnosed since January 1, 2005 must:
 - 1) be examined by an accredited veterinarian, determined free from vesicular stomatitis, and accompanied by a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection that states such,
 - 2) have negative test within ten days of shipment,
 - 3) obtain an entry permit number which must be recorded on Certificate of Veterinary Inspection for each livestock shipment,
 - 4) be quarantined upon entry into the state for at least 14 days, then inspected by an accredited veterinarian and found free of the disease.

Vesicular stomatitis is viral disease primarily affecting cattle, horses and swine and occasionally sheep and goats. Humans may also become infected if infected animals are handled. Affected livestock have blister-like lesions in the mouth, lips, nostrils, hooves, and teats. As the blisters break, raw tissue is painful and may lead to loss of appetite and lameness. The disease can cause significant economic loss to livestock producers and is of special concern because clinical signs are similar to foot and mouth disease. Permit numbers can be obtained by calling the Tennessee Department of Agriculture during normal business hours at (615) 837-5120. For a copy of the rules or for more information, visit www.tennessee.gov/agriculture or contact the State Veterinarian's office at (615) 837-5120.

November Conference Aims to Cultivate Farm Income Through Quality “Agri-Tourism”

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – A statewide conference for current and potential agri-tourism entrepreneurs has been scheduled for Nov. 7-9 in Franklin. The “Agri-tourism: Cultivating Farm Revenue” conference will include educational sessions for both beginning and established farm fun operators; a trade show featuring the types of products and services necessary to successful agri-tourism operations; and opportunities to network with other entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs will learn about what is going on in agri-tourism throughout North America in a special keynote presentation from successful agri-tourism operator Darren Schmall, also known nationally as “The Pizza Farmer.”

Agri-tourism is a relatively new term used to describe a wide variety of farm-related activities, products and services meant to attract visitors to farms. Typical Tennessee agri-tourism activities include “pick-your-own” farms, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, farm tours, on-farm gift shops and wineries that use Tennessee grown products. Dan Strasser, TDA Agri-tourism coordinator, says that “such an excellent opportunity for Tennessee farmers to learn direct marketing techniques doesn't come along every day, and in fact has never come along before right here in Tennessee. Informative general sessions like ‘Marketing for the Marketing-Impaired’ will be accompanied by educational breakout sessions like ‘Good to Go! - Getting to Yes with Agri-Tourism.’ The educational sessions will offer separate topics for both experienced and beginner agri-tourism operators. Anyone considering agri-tourism as a way to increase farm income should attend this conference.”

The conference is part of efforts by the Tennessee Agri-Tourism Initiative partners to build farm income in the state. The initiative is a cooperative effort among the departments of Agriculture, Tourist Development, Economic and Community Development, the Tennessee Farm Bureau Federation and the University of Tennessee Extension, including the Center for Profitable Agriculture. The initiative has received major support from the USDA Rural Development program.

Conference information and registration materials are available online at www.picktnproducts.org or by contacting the Tennessee Department of Agriculture at (615) 837-5160. Early registration is encouraged as space is limited.

Mushrooms: Sales of the 2004-05 U.S. mushroom crop are 853 million pounds, virtually unchanged from the 2003-04 season but 1 percent above the 2002-03 season. Value of sales for the 2004-05 U.S. mushroom crop is \$908 million, down 1 percent from the previous season but 2 percent above the 2002-03 season. The number of growers, at 275, is down 3 from last season. The average price is \$1.06 per pound, down 2 cents from 2003-04.

Sales reported by growers of Agaricus mushrooms for fresh market are 696 million pounds, down 1 percent from last season. Sales of Agaricus mushrooms for processing are 142 million pounds, 3 percent above last season. Value of sales for all Agaricus mushrooms totaled 862 million dollars, down 2 percent from the previous season but 1 percent higher than 2002-03.

Farm Labor: There were 1,332,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of July 10-16, 2005, up 2 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 930,000 workers were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 402,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$9.39 per hour during the July 2005 reference week, up 35 cents from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$8.62 per hour, up 28 cents from last July, while livestock workers earned \$9.25 per hour compared with \$8.74 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$8.78 per hour, was up 35 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 40.6 hours for hired workers during the survey week, up 4 percent from a year ago.

Chicken & Eggs: U.S. egg production totaled 7.56 billion during July 2005, up slightly from last year. Production included 6.44 billion table eggs, and 1.12 billion hatching eggs, of which 1.06 billion were broiler-type and 62 million were egg-type. The total number of layers during July 2005 averaged 340 million, down 1 percent from a year earlier. July egg production per 100 layers was 2,222 eggs, up 1 percent from July 2004.

**Layers and Eggs: Layers on Hand and Eggs Produced by Selected States
and United States, During July 2004 and 2005**

Selected States	Table Egg Layers in Flocks 30,000 or more		All Layers ¹		Eggs per 100 for All Layers ¹	
	2004	2005	2004	2005	2004	2005
	Thousands		Number			
Alabama	1,870	1,780	9,548	9,220	1,864	1,898
Arkansas	4,544	4,040	15,225	14,414	1,944	1,998
Georgia	10,965	9,776	20,076	18,919	2,117	2,114
North Carolina	3,317	3,327	10,817	10,932	1,960	1,994
All Other States ²	256,445	256,727	286,813	286,699	2,247	2,260
United States	277,141	275,650	342,479	340,184	2,207	2,222

¹Includes all layers and eggs produced in both table egg and hatching egg flocks regardless of size. ² Tennessee is included in all other states total.